

The Church and Social Media:

Or, Preparing the Church for the Post-computer World

#hw2c

Introduction

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Some History

- *Wrote my first commercial software when I was 13. It was a DBMS.*
- *I was a FidoNet Sysop.*
- *I remember punch cards.*



So, why are we here?

Who's here?

My Premise:

The Church, like most of society, is a conservative institution, and as a whole tends to be reactive rather than innovative. Today, if we're not going to be totally marginalized, we must begin to innovate, using the best tools we have available.

A Little Historical Perspective

Filled with sweeping generalizations, oversimplifications, and lovely 3-D animation.



So what's the problem?

The Boiled Frog Problem

When you're essentially reactive, and not paying attention (distracted or disinterested), you miss gradual changes in your environment.



The Far Horizons Problem

When your focus is from the beginning of time into eternity, you can miss important changes that seem like fads.



The Pace-of-change Problem

As the pace of change accelerates, we lose the ability to adapt.
Alvin Toffler and Future Shock. Published in ... 1984



Are we in a crisis?

Google "Catholic Church Crisis" and receive 37,800,000 pages

A Catalog of Crises

- *Sexual Abuse Crisis: both abuse and cover-up.*
 - *Loss of trust*
 - *Loss of credibility*
 - *Loss of resources / bankruptcy*
- *Vocations Crisis: precipitous drop in numbers of priests and religious*
 - *Inability to staff schools, parishes, hospitals.*

A Catalog of Crises

- *Catechesis* on our faith failed to pass
- *Faith*
- *Faith*
- *Attrition* because *s, not* *ey're bored.*



A Catalog of Crises, cont.

- *Leadership Crisis: Who's leading, and how?*
 - *Shifting roles for bishops, clergy, laity*
- *Disunity Crisis: We're no longer one Church.*
 - *Who's "really" Catholic?*
 - *Ideology has replaced mission*

A Catalog of Crises, cont.

- *Victimology Crisis: We're under attack by the media, the liberals, the Traditionalists, the government, etc.*
 - *Even if true, so what?*
 - *Diminishes our responsibility*
- *Resource Management Crisis: Consolidation, redistribution.*
 - *Empty urban churches, bursting suburban churches*
 - *Encumbered by useless facilities*
- *Did I miss any?*

Crisis? What crisis?

- *Don't panic.*
- *The Church has ALWAYS been in one crisis or another. This is really not new.*
- *Crisis simply means we haven't kept pace with change. It doesn't mean we can't.*
- *Finally, remember: It's God's Church.*

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- Crisis = Danger + Opportunity
- Why do we see only danger?

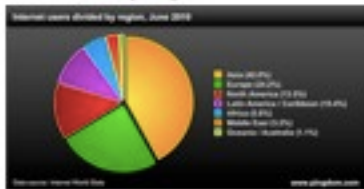


Does Internet technology present an opportunity in these crises?

What's this Internet everyone's talking about?

Some Internet Statistics

- 1.5B Personal Computers in use in 2010
- Total Mobile devices in 2011 = 467,701,000
- Apple sold 15 million iOS devices last year.
- Internet Use by Region:



Email usage 2010

- 1,800,000,000 email users worldwide
- 107,000,000,000,000 emails sent in 2010
- 89.1% of emails were SPAM



Internet Media

- *3 Billion YouTube videos viewed daily*
- *Average video views per month in US = 136*
- *5 Billion photos hosted on Flickr.com*
- *>3 Billion photos uploaded to FB monthly*



Charles on page 40, 78, 89, 90

Facebook Conquers the World

- *800,000,000 active users*
- *>50% of FB users are daily users*
- *20 Million FB apps installed daily*
- *350,000,000 mobile users*



[Fake]

Other Data Points

- *The Arab Spring*
- *Occupy Wall Street, et al*
- *"What's in a Name? Ask Google"*
NYT 11-27-11
- *Last Winter: "The Internet" halted SOPA/PIPA, which was shoe-in, fast-track legislation.*
- *Komen for the Cure and Planned Parenthood*

What's the opportunity?

- *Social Media is beginning to drive the news cycle.*
- *Means of communications are accessible, and unfiltered, if uncontrolled.*
- *Access is nearly universal.*
- *"Virality" shapes reality.*

Conclusions

- *Social Media & Internet are here to stay*
- *These tools are how humans interact, get information, express themselves, and shape reality.*
- *The Church MUST be present in this medium with the message of the Gospel, and the voice of Christ.*

Next: What to do, how to do it

- *Shaping the Church's presence online*
- *Using the tools that are available right now.*
- *Some best practices.*



Questions? Feedback?
